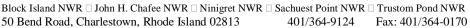
News Release

Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex





Date: September 24, 2015



For Immediate Release For Further Information Contact:

Charlie Vandemoer, Refuge Manager (401) 364-9124 ext. 11

Public Comments Sought on the Sachuest Bay Resiliency Project

Charlestown, RI – The public is invited to provide any comments related to implementation of the Sachuest Bay Resiliency Project in Middletown, RI. In response to Hurricane Sandy, the Department of the Interior made funding available from the Disaster Relief and Appropriations Act to enhance and improve the resiliency of coastal areas and communities from future storms.

Working together, the Town of Middletown, Aquidneck Land Trust, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Center for Ecosystem Restoration, the Preservation Society of Newport and others developed the Sachuest Bay Resiliency Project, which has received \$2,289,680.00 in federal funding through a competitive grant process. The Fish and Wildlife Service is assisting these groups in the planning phases of the project.

The Sachuest Bay project includes a variety of actions which, when taken together, are designed to improve the resiliency of the area and the community to future storm events. The actions proposed to be implemented include:

- Control of non-native and undesirable plant species across 325 acres in the Norman Bird Sanctuary. This will improve the condition of native habitats and the wildlife resources which use these areas;
- Development of a land conservation plan by the Aquidneck Land Trust which could lead to conservation of land parcels for water quality protection, open space, and wildlife habitat;
- Construction of 8 dune walkover structures at Second Beach to enhance the dune complex
 and help prevent overwash and storm damage to the dunes, parking lot, and related facilities
 to prevent pedestrian use from damaging the dunes;
- Dune restoration along Second Beach, one of the largest intact dune complexes in Southern New England, by filling eroded areas, applying geotextile reinforcements.
- Construction of up to 10 best management sites designed to directly improve water quality.

A project summary which includes maps and general designs can be found on and downloaded from the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex website:

http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Ninigret/About_the_Complex/

Or, a hard copy of the project summary can be viewed at the Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Middletown, RI during normal business hours.

Written comments can either be dropped off at the Sachuest Point NWR Visitor Center or mailed to:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Attn: Refuge Manager 50 Bend Road Charlestown, RI 02813

Comments must be received by October 26, 2015.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas.

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